

## The Colored American

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### THE RACE PROBLEM.

Our leading newspapers, both black and white, have been hammering away and wasting tons of rhetoric in elucidating the so-called race problem and offering each its peculiar nostrum for cure or alleviation. There are many grave facts, however, which do not seem to have reached the apprehension of these learned doctors. Conditions in the South are well understood, and touching them all are agreed. Simmons, of North Carolina, the unspeakable Tillman of the adjoining State, Money of Mississippi, and a host of lesser lights are the exponents of the Southern idea of violence, peonage and of the denial of even industrial education to the end that the Negro there shall continue the ignorant, unskilled farm laborer of that section, the victim of store orders and of the wicked capricious will of the brutal white planter, incapable of accumulating a foot of land or of saving a penny of his earnings.

But the conditions in the North and West excite our greatest and gravest concern. Excepting the honorable conduct of the Mine Workers' Union and the Federation of Musicians, every labor organization sets its face sternly against the admission of a Negro, and of course against his employment in the ranks of skilled labor. Tuskegee is right and we support and defend its mission and purposes. Industrial schools are sending forth year after year colored youth with cunning hands equipped for the struggle of life, and yet in spite of their skill they stand practically manacled and idle while the great procession of the material industries of the country marches on past their post of enforced idleness to the consummation of its aims and to the incalculable financial benefit of all its factors.

Does not the ever-increasing tide of foreign immigration, aggregating 100,000 in one month, furnish forth the real explanation of the attitude of the North and West toward our people? Is not this immigration a menace to our whole country, speaking

of it as a mere positive proposition? There is undoubtedly a strong determination among the whites that the Negro shall not become a rival to these unkempt and often vicious foreigners in the labor market. We know that it takes just five years to make them full-fledged American citizens and then, though ignorant of the language of the country and utterly unacquainted with the genius of its institutions, they are promptly absorbed into the labor unions, married to American women and caressed and placated by American politicians.

When are the white American-born citizens going to do justice to that other American-born citizen, the Afro-American, with his record of peacefulness and loyalty to God and country?

If this vexed question of the place which the Negro is to hold in the economy of this land is ever to cease being agitated, the first step must be taken by the American-born white man in according justice to the black man, in giving him an opportunity to earn an honest living in every walk of life for which he is fitted. Otherwise it will not do. Every fair white man will concede that the black man has not had a fair chance in any section of the country since emancipation, and every Negro has felt the disheartening effect of his exclusion from remunerative industries. When will the discrimination cease? Undoubtedly a larger measure of justice to our race will deplete our police courts and our jails of their too numerous colored prisoners, will reduce the number of idle black tatterdemalions who parade our streets in the wake of every band of music and give a healthier tone and renewed hope to our really earnest, conscientious ministers of the gospel who are honestly striving to lift up the mass of vice and viciousness which so greatly afflicts us.

### THE SITUATION.

The Southwestern Christian Advocate, always one of our most welcome exchanges, in a thoughtful cogent editorial in a recent issue gives its views on the causes back of the persistent agitation of the Negro question these days. It maintains with singular force that the object is to mollify the great Northern sentiment now favorable to our people and to induce it to consent to the repeal of the suffrage amendments to the constitution and thus forever destroy the votive influence of the Northern Negro who holds the balance of power in several Northern States. It wants the colored voters to use their ballots judiciously and to be everlastingly on guard that our enemies do not secure political office where they may imperil the few rights that remain to us.

The advice, it seems to us, is most timely. So far as the political liberty of the Southern colored man is concerned it has become merely a thing of shreds and patches, the plaything of a few densely ignorant and prejudiced white election officers. Northern colored men, watch your candidates! Preserve your privileges, and above all else live up to your highest possibilities and the ingenious schemes of your enemies will prove abortive.

### GET TOGETHER.

Bishop H. M. Turner, of the A. M. E. Church, may not be sound on the emigration to Africa question, but his head must be conceded to be exceedingly level in his advocacy of the consolidation of the two colleges—Morris Brown and Edward Waters, which are supported by that great connection. It has long been a just criticism upon our people that we can inaugurate and maintain more churches and educational institutions than any race of people on earth, while our ventures in business circles are doomed to early decay and death. Latterly, however, the criticism is not applicable to our educational efforts. With a few brilliant exceptions like the Tuskegee Institute, Hampton and Howard, they fail to meet their projectors good if mistaken intentions. They have become too numerous, and

the incessant demand upon Northern philanthropy has caused a marked reaction against, not their purposes, but their multiplication, which has proved a source of weakness and a detriment rather than a benefit to our people. One good, strong college (and spare us from the term "university" if you please), ably officered and soundly administered, will prove of greater value to the race and will excite the generous interest of liberal friends throughout the country in larger degree than a half dozen of our alleged Universities with their perennial harvest of half-educated students and a constantly increasing crop of honorary doctors of divinity and of the law who are the laughing stock of all thoroughly educated men. Some wise man, with imprudence, perhaps, said not long since that it was fast coming to be a distinction among colored men to be a plain "Mister," and to have never been invested with the pomp and splendor which attends the Rev. Ignoramus Muttonhead, D. D., LL. D., A. S. S., the announcement of whose presence in any community other than his own must be deferred until the arrival on the next succeeding freight train of the ponderous degrees with which he afflicts his visiting cards and the colored press.

### THE TIDE OF EMIGRATION.

New England papers, and notably the Boston Journal, are reporting as a result of the profound unrest of the race in the South a marked migration of our people to the New England States. We have heretofore noted the tide of emigration to the Pacific coast and to the larger opportunities of the Western States in general from the exasperating conditions of country life in the South, and this new direction of departure but points the moral with greater exactitude. There is trouble in the South and its appreciation by our people is profound and far-reaching.

We give it, however, the counsel of our best thought and of our most deliberate judgment when we say that the wholesale abandonment of their Southern vantage ground by the colored people is an error—an egregious error—pregnant with far-reaching results. It seems to us that down there the friction, the violence, the rasp of contact are economic rather than political. It is admitted that the Negro is pushing himself forward on all lines, that he is possessing the land, that he is acquiring its betterments, that as a matter of fact he is getting better and more serviceable education than the whites, that the great impulse of the generations North is strengthening him to the disadvantage of the Southern white youth and that the thoughtful white men of the South are recognizing the fact. Every body knows that our Civil Service Commission finds the Negro easily the leader in any competitive examination they hold in any Southern city. Every man who reads knows of the phenomenal strides the race has made since emancipation in the acquisition of all sorts of property.

What a travesty upon the boasted superiority of the white race is the spectacle of the son of a slave holder waiting, hat in hand, in the outer room of his father's former chattel, and patiently, for the chance to borrow or beg a \$5 bill. Yet how numerous has this occurred within the experience of every colored man of affairs.

The tide of foreign immigration rejects the importunities of Southern solicitation. To them the Southland is a "pent-up Utica." The influences which direct and stimulate this grave menace to our Government are unworthy because they are commercial purely and in no sense patriotic. The steamship companies and the railroads know that the Negro is the master of the labor situation of the South and the Negro should realize the great possibilities of his mastery. Wealth and education and the consideration both always bring will be his if he preserve his patience and remain at home working out his destiny there.

### SUFFRAGE LAWS UNJUST.

I do not believe that any State should make a law that permits an ignorant and poverty-stricken white man to vote and prevents a black man in the same condition from voting.

Such a law is not only unjust, but it will react, as all unjust laws do, in time; for the effect of such a law is to encourage the Negro to secure education and property, and at the same time it encourages the white man to remain in ignorance and poverty. I believe that in time, through the operation of intelligence and friendly race relations, all cheating at the ballot-box in the South will cease.

It will become apparent that the white man, who begins by cheating a Negro out of his ballot soon learns to cheat a white man out of his, and that the man who does this ends his career of dishonesty by the theft of property or by some equally serious crime.

In my opinion, the time will come when the South will encourage all of its citizens to vote. It will see that it pays better, from every standpoint, to have healthy, vigorous life than to have that political stagnation which always results when one-half the population has no share and no interest in the government.

As a rule, I believe in universal, free suffrage, but I believe that in the South we are confronted with peculiar conditions that justify the protection of the ballot in many of the States, for a while at least, either by an educational test, a property test, or by both combined; but whatever tests are required they should be made to apply with equal and exact justice to both races.—B. T. Washington in The North American, Philadelphia, June 7, 1903.

### A WHITE AUSTRALIA IMPOSSIBLE.

We are just in receipt of a series of pamphlets on the above subject, sent by our good friend, Mr. A. Goldsmith, of Victoria, Port Melbourne, Australia. These pamphlets treat on The Same Cause of Colour in Mankind, The Whole Race is Mixing, and The Negro, the Third Great Colored Race in the World. The author, Mr. E. W. Cole, treats these subjects in a most exhaustive and comprehensive way, with specimen pictures of the dark races, with pictures of white men, who have gone to the Torrid Zones, and with faces of the American Negroes, Africans, West Indians, Malays, and all of the dark races. It is needless to say that the types of the American Negroes, which he gives, outstrip all of the other dark races in the physical size of the heads and in the strength and character of the faces.

We are glad to note that the Conference of the A. M. E. Zion Church lately in session at Washington, D. C., took strong ground against the scoundrels who are swarming especially in the country districts of the South, collecting money from our poor deluded people to support the agitation in favor of the ex-slave pension bill. Action by such a dignified and representative body cannot fail to have potential influence in counteracting the villainous schemes of these rascals and confidence operators who know how utterly impossible is the passage of such a law. We hope to see them in the clutches of the law officers and condign and exemplary punishment meted out to them for obtaining money under false pretenses. Every race journal should expose them and every minister of the gospel should hurl his anathemas upon their sinful souls. Especially should our country itinerant clergy give them a warm shaking up in the heart to heart talks which are held with the laity of their churches.